

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY ACCESSIBILITY AUGUST 15, 2005 MEETING MINUTES

Present: Chuck Osborn, Katie Anderson, David Carter, Vicki Pappas, Elizabeth Hall, Kristi Ross, Aaron Smith, Suzie Rimstidt. **Staff Present:** Lee Bowlen, City of Bloomington Community and Family Resources. **Guests:** James McNamara, Deputy Mayor, City of Bloomington, and Barbara McKinney, Human Rights Commission Director/ADA Compliance Officer, City of Bloomington Legal Department.

Introductions/Media. Introductions were made. Members of the group extended special congratulations to Susan Rinne on her Noon Edition radio show appearance on accessibility, and on Options for Better Living currently being considered for a sizable grant from the County.

Business Registration:

Chuck Osborn presented background information on the CCA's work towards getting a business registration process in place to improve accessibility in Bloomington and Monroe County. Chuck and the CCA have had extensive discussions over several years with Jim Gerstbauer, Monroe County/City of Bloomington Building Commissioner, aimed at solving the problem of new businesses starting up in existing buildings, or businesses changing from one type to another. In these cases, no inspection is required (because occupancy classification does not change) and there are often problems of inaccessibility in the resulting businesses. If a business licensing or registration process was in place, the tenants would be informed of ADA requirements *prior* to remodeling or renovating existing spaces.

Both James McNamara and Barbara McKinney were in attendance to follow up on the proposal of business licensing and/or registration, which the CCA brought up with Mayor Kruzan when it met with him in May of 2004. Although Jim Gerstbauer was unable to attend today, he sent a memorandum (attached) providing background information on the business registration proposal, his support for the proposal, and a list of benefits and agencies which have expressed interest in the proposed regulations. His office has the software for building permit tracking and use.

Barbara McKinney reported that she, Deputy Mayor McNamara and City of Bloomington Fire Chief Jeff Barlow met to discuss the suggestion that the Fire Department conduct inspections of ADA compliance along with their Certificate of Occupancy inspections. Ms. McKinney and Mr. McNamara got a very positive response from Chief Barlow, who indicated that his department would be glad to add an ADA survey to their inspection process. The difficulty with this is that while CCA interprets a change of business as the impetus for ADA compliance, Mr. McNamara believes many business changes (e.g. retail to retail) are not considered such for zoning purposes, so Certificate of Occupancy inspections would not be required and hence would not cover all of the types of business variety and/or tenant change issues that the CCA is concerned with.

The Bloomington Fire Chief is interested in the business license proposal, but feels that a county-wide building license would be more inclusive. Chief Barlow feels more than a Certificate of Occupancy is necessary.

Chuck Osborn advocated that a business registration should be required before building, remodeling, or switch of ownership.

Mr. McNamara feels that since opposition to such a business registration would be great, a short term solution would be to have Chief Jeff Barlow incorporate the CCA accessibility check list as part of obtaining Certificates of Occupancy. A meeting with Chief Barlow, Barbara McKinney, Jim Gerstbauer, Chuck Osborn and Mr. McNamara will be a first step.

Mr. McNamara reported that Mayor Kruzan supports this concept, and that he will not “let the issue drop”. Mayor Kruzan feels that business registration would be a good tool for improving accessibility in our community and for economic development as well.

Barbara McKinney said she will talk to Mr. McNamara about including parking since she gets many complaints about it. Ms. McKinney also suggested including the new President of the Chamber of Commerce in this discussion

Concerns

Aaron Smith reported that the rotunda door to the back patio at Ivy Tech where student activities are held is not electric or accessible. Another student director will be taking this to the Director of Facilities, Doug Mattick. Aaron will talk to Steve at the Student Government Association.

AccessAbility Decals

David Carter received an email from Jeanne Gunning of WonderLab requesting a CCA decal. David had surveyed this facility in 2004 and found it accessible except for some adjustments on some internal doors. There's also some controversy about the one accessible parking place, but the parking place is truly the city's, which will correct it when possible.

David will present the decal to WonderLab, and Vicki will submit it to *The Herald Times*. In the H-T article Vicki will suggest that other businesses may request surveys and Chamber booklets on employability and the ADA.

ADA Celebration

One hundred and fifty persons attended the ADA Celebration at the Arts Garden in Indianapolis. Chuck Osborn represented the present status of communities and the ADA in the presentation. SICIL took a bus full of consumers, and Elizabeth Hall said the folks from Stone Belt who took the bus had a great time. Elizabeth praised Vicki Pappas and the ADA Steering Committee for the successful program.

October Awards Ceremony

The Mayfields Ballroom, 2100 Liberty Drive (off West Bloomfield Road) will be the site of the October Annual Awards Ceremony; they have waived the fee for use of their facility. CCA will do a survey at MCL and, if it is accessible, award a decal the night of the Ceremony. Ivy Tech, Kiwanis, and the IU Credit Union have already made donations to support the ceremony.

Elizabeth called the CCA's attention to the wording of the Business Service Award. She feels that “employment” gets hidden in the current wording.

Nomination forms need to be sent out.

Committee Progress Reports

The new agenda reflects the new structure of CCA.

Communications and Operations Committee

Vicki suggested getting the decal awards and the Awards Ceremony included in The Chamber of Commerce Business Network.

Special Work Groups

Way to Go will begin a follow-up system to determine outcomes of the bus training. Suzie Rimstidt mentioned that in the future such outcome information could be used to apply for a grant to make a training video.

Elizabeth Hall reported a follow-up of the 2004 Spring meeting with Mayor Kruzan; the City of Bloomington has made a real effort toward hiring people with disabilities and now has four more persons on the payroll. This was one of the specific requests made to Mayor Kruzan at that meeting. The minutes from that meeting are on the CCA web site.

*Respectfully submitted,
Suzie Rimstidt*